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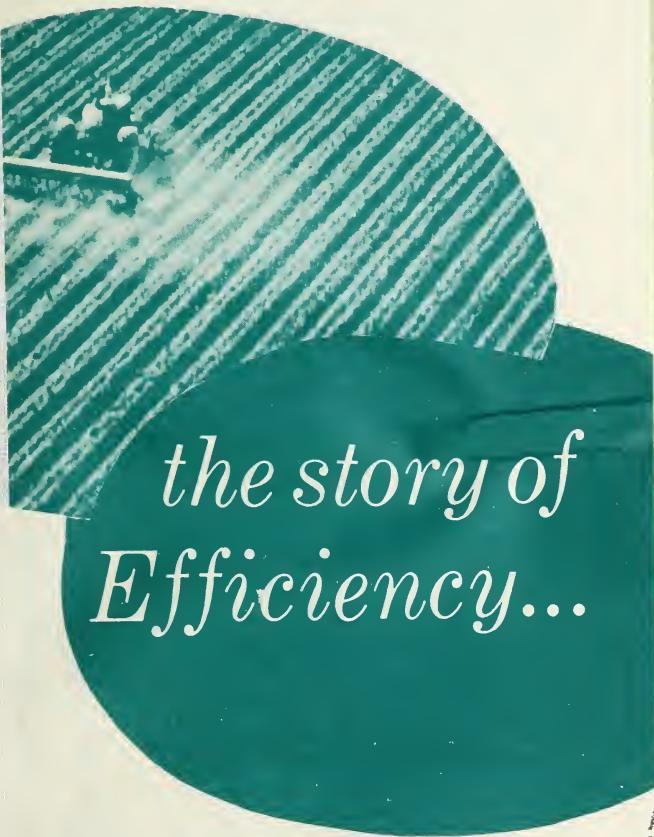
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WHY FOOD IS PLENTIFUL



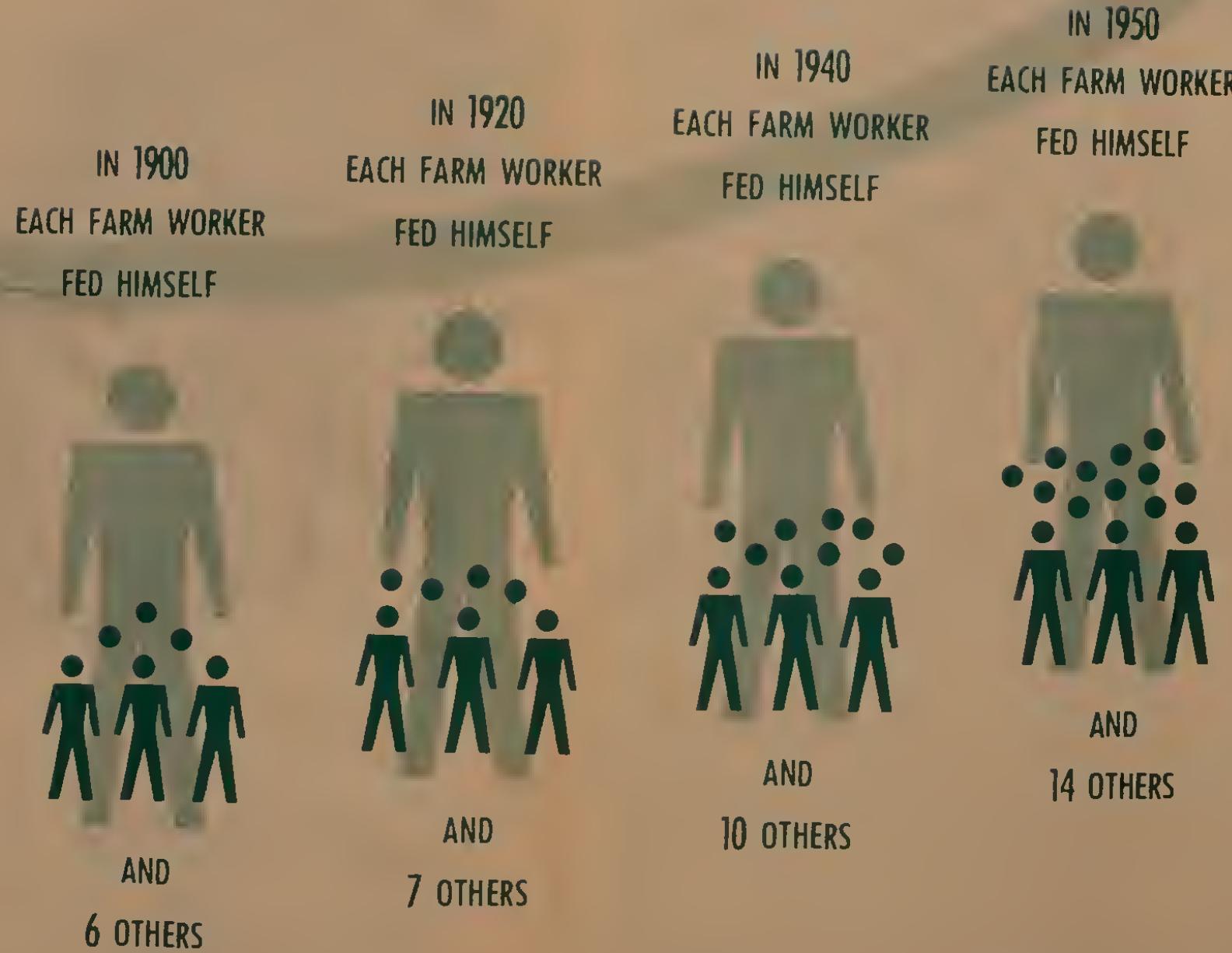
*the story of
Efficiency...*

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C & R-PREP.

THE STORY OF EFFICIENCY . . .



NOW . . .

IN 1961
EACH FARM WORKER
FEEDS HIMSELF
AND
25 OTHERS



THE STORY OF EFFICIENCY . . .

The efficiency of American agriculture is one of the most amazing success stories of our time. The average productivity per farm worker has more than doubled in the last 20 years. In fact, productivity has gone up more in the last 2 decades than in all recorded time prior to 1940.

One hour of farm labor today produces four times as much food and fiber as it did 40 years ago. Crop production is 65 percent greater per acre. Output per breeding animal is 88 percent higher.

Productivity of the American farm worker in the 1950's increased by $6\frac{1}{2}$ percent a year. This is about three times the increased output in non-agricultural industry, which went up around 2 percent a year during the same period.

In 1910, it took a farmer 135 hours to produce 100 bushels of corn, 106 hours for 100 bushels of wheat, and 276 hours for a bale of cotton. In 1960, it took about 15 man-hours to produce 100 bushels of corn, 13 for 100 bushels of wheat, and 57 for a bale of cotton.

Reasons for Progress

The foundation of this progress in agriculture lies in government and industry research, education, and the hard work and ingenuity of farmers and ranchers.

Research is constantly improving plants and animals, providing better management of soil and water, seeking new uses for farm products, and devising new and better methods of storing, processing, transporting, and merchandising farm products. Educational services quickly carry this new knowledge to farmers and others who put it to use.

More and better machines continue to replace labor and boost production. We now have more than four times as many cornpickers on farms as in 1945, more than 14 times as many forage harvesters, and more than 15 times as many pickup balers.

Heavier applications and more widespread use of fertilizers helped greatly to increase crop yield, giving larger output on fewer acres with less labor. Potash use is now three times the 1945 level and nitrogen use more than five times that of 15 years ago.

More general use of pesticides has cut production losses. A wide variety of products and services, many of them unknown a few years ago, are now in common use on U. S. farms.

An Efficient Industry

The broiler industry is a good illustration of efficiency from farm to supermarket.

Research developed a faster-growing broiler and a better diet for it. This new type of bird, fed the improved diet, produces a 3-pound broiler in 9 weeks, as compared with a 1.6-pound broiler in 9 weeks 30 years ago.

Farmers improved production methods. Many specialize in growing broilers the year-around. Processors use assembly-line methods. Cut-up chicken of uniform high quality now is a large volume seller in supermarkets, rather than a specialty item.

And since World War II, the retail price of frying chickens dropped more than a cent a pound a year.

Food for the Future

If our population reaches 230 million by 1975 (as predicted), farmers and ranchers must produce 16.3 billion pounds more red meat, 47 billion pounds more milk, 20.7 million tons more fruits and vegetables, and 20 billion more eggs.

To produce these and other foods needed, another 200 million acres of cropland would be required if yields in 1975 are the same as in 1956.

But we don't have 200 million more acres of cropland. And we won't need them.

Greater efficiency in crop and livestock production will make it possible to feed 230 million people in 1975 from about the same total acreage now used. Further, today's farmers are applying the soil and water conservation measures needed to protect the land for maximum safe use in 1975—and far into the future.

Issued August 1961

Cooperative Extension Work: United States Department of Agriculture and State Land-Grant Colleges and Universities Cooperating.

